

"Making A World Of Difference"

Would You Wanna' Be A Fish?

by

Jamie Drake

Period 4

03/22/01

Most of our planet is made up of ocean water. Through a cycle of evaporation and rain our oceans help clean our air and provide cool breezes on hot, sunny days. Our oceans and beaches provide us with many recreational opportunities. Now one knows this better than us who live on or near the California coastline. Just like in the movie "JAWS" danger lurks in the waters of our beautiful coast. Our beaches are being contaminated by various forms of pollution. With waters that pose such danger, would you wanna' be a fish?

One of the most obvious forms of pollution is trash. People go down to the beach, eat something, and throw the wrapper on the ground even though there is a trash can a few feet away. That trash can cause death to animals and make our beautiful beaches ugly. This is something we can try and prevent. If you see a piece of trash on the beach, throw it away. By doing that you can be a big help in keeping our ocean and beaches clean.

Runoff and oil pollution are hard to prevent. Runoff is water drains from the land into the ocean through gutters, storm drains, erosion, and rivers that empty into the ocean. In this water there is oil, pesticides, chemicals, human waste, and bacteria. Oil pollution also comes from offshore oil drilling and boat bilge. Offshore oil drilling causes pollution from spills and operational discharges. 15 million gallons of oil are released into the water a year. Bilge cleaning and other ship operations release 137 million gallons of oil a year. That is a lot of oil that is polluting our water and killing sea animals.

Just in the Ventura County area, 45 beaches are closed this week because of "excessive bacteria in the water." (newspaper, 3/9/01) That's in our own backyard! We are causing this mess. We need to stop polluting our beaches and oceans. This summer when it's hot and you

want to go to the beach but you can't, remember that it is because of our carelessness.

Ocean pollution is just getting worse and worse. We need to stop contaminating our beautiful water. I thought I wanted to be a fish. I don't think I do anymore.